गेहूं के समर्थन मूल्य में वृद्धि

812. श्री राम जेठमलानी: क्या कृषि मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार ने देश में गेहूं के उत्पादन को बढ़ावा देने के लिए अगली रबी फसल के दौरान गेहूं के समर्थन मूल्य में 9.2 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि की घोषणा की है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या कृषि लागत और मूल्य आयोग द्वारा गेहूं की कीमत सरकार द्वारा घोषित मूल्य से कम आंकी गई थी;

(ग) यदि हां, तो उपर्युक्त आयोग ने गेहूं की कीमत कितने प्रतिशत बढ़ाने की सिफारिश की; और

(घ) गेहूं के उत्पादन को बढ़ाने के लिए गेहूं के उत्पादन की लागत को कम करने की बजाय गेहूं के बिक्री मूल्य को बढ़ाये जाने के क्या कारण हैं?

कृषि मंत्री (श्री चतुरानन मिश्र): (क) जी, हां।

(ख) जी, हां।

(ग) कृषि लागत तथा मूल्य आयोग द्वारा की गई सिफारिशों के अनुसार, 1996-97 के लिए गेहूं के न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्य गत वर्ष की तुलना में 6.6 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि प्रदर्शित करते हैं।

(घ) 1995-96 में गेहूं के उत्पादन में प्रत्यक्ष रूप से आई गिरावट और परिणामत: इसकी खरीद में हुई कमी को रोकने तथा अन्तर-फसल मूल्य साम्यता बनाए रखने के लिए यह जरूरी समझा गया कि 1997-98 में बेची जाने वाली 1996-97 की फसल के लिए गेहूं के न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्य में वृद्धि की जाए।

Decline in irrigated land

813. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a book namely "In the Famine trap" written by one agricultural scientist, Dr. Devinder Sharma has made some shocking revelation regarding decline in irrigated land in the country, particularly in Punjab and Haryana;

(b) whether the revelation includes the going down of watertable in these States and also the reduction of organic matters in soil etc; and

(c) if so, the details of these revelations and the steps being taken in the matter by Government to tackle the problem?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Newsitem relating to destruction of evidence by Union Carbide Plant

814. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "vital evidence is being destroyed at carbide plant", as reported in "The Statesman", dated the 17th October, 1996;

(b) if so, whether the new Management of Eveready Industries India Limited are trying to dismantle the structure and also removing certain machinery in the plant premises;

(c) whether such a step of the multinational company is likely to create hurdles for Bhopal Gas victims; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) to (d) Yes Sir. According to information received from the C.B.I, and the State Government of Madhya Pradesh, the dismantaling work has been stayed vide Court's orders dated 28.10.96. The matter is sub-judice.

Superfast Train between Sealdah and Siliguri

815. DR. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme to introduce a superfast train between Sealdah and Siliguri;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government have formulated any other scheme to provide better and quicker transportation between Calcutta and the strategic and developing areas of North Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) 2 pairs of Broad Gauge Express trains viz. Darjeeling Mail and TeestaTorsha Express are already running exclusively for North Bengal area area. Gour Express and Sealdah-Katihar Express already cater to one section of North Bengal passengers. Further Guwahati bound trains from Calcutta viz. Kanchanjunga Express, Kamrup Express and Saraighat Express also serve the passengers of Siliguri and other parts of North Bengal. Moreover, the frequency of Sareighat Express has bee increased to tri-weekly from 1.10.96. Introduction of a direct train between Sealdah and Siliguri is not feasible at present due to gauge variation.

Effect of Liberalisation programme on Wildlife

816. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the London-based Environmental Investigation Agency report, as published in the "Times of India" dated 23.10.96 — Bombay Edition, wherein its starting revelations are about ongoing effect of liberalisation programme on wildlife in India and it has accused the Government for negligence of country's wildlife;

(b) whether economic liberalisation has opened all areas to development and tiger habitats across India were being encroached upon, polluted and destroyed by industrial concerns and Government's "Project Tiger" has lost its direction.

(c) whether wildlife trade is going on at large scale; and

(d) the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAIN PRASAD NISHED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. While tiger habitats are normally kept inviolate, some human use is allowed only if it does not impact adversely on wildlife and its habitat. It is also not a fact that Project Tiger has lost its direction, but in the absence of adequate investment and infrastructural support, it has not been able to fully meet the emerging challenges.

(c) No, Sir. However, cases of illegal trade in wildlife and their parts and products are detected from time to time as a result of increased level of enforcement.

(d) The steps being taken to control illegal wildlife trade are given in the Statement.

Statement

Steps to control illegal wildlife trade

(i) Hunting of wild animals included in Scheduled I to IV of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, has been banned by law.

(ii) Special measures for protection and conservation of tiger, elephants and rhinos and their habitat are being implemented.

(iii) A network of 441 wildlife sanctuaries and 80 National Parks covering 1,48,000 sq. km. has been set up for conservation of wild flora and fauna. Financial assistance is provided by the Central Government for development of national parks and sanctuaries on request from the State Governments.

(iv) Raids are carried out by the wildlife authorities, whenever information of illegal trading in wildlife animals reaches them.

(v) International Trade in Endangered Species of animals and articles made thereof is regulated under the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITIES).

(vi) Regional and Sub-regional offices of Wildlife Preservation have been setup mostly at the main export centres of the country to prevent smuggling of wildlife products.

(vii) Interdepartmental coordination has been enhanced with other enforcement